

<b>Board/Committee:</b>	POLICY AND ORGANISATION BOARD
<b>Date of meeting:</b>	27 JANUARY 2022
<b>Title:</b>	RENEWAL OF ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH PARTNERSHIP AGREEMENT
<b>Author:</b>	CHIEF EXECUTIVE
<b>Status:</b>	FOR DECISION

### **Purpose**

This report seeks approval to renew the Environmental Health Partnership Agreement with Fareham Borough Council

### **Recommendation**

**That the Board delegates authority to the Chief Executive to renew the Environmental Health Partnership Agreement with Fareham Borough Council on an open-ended basis with appropriate clauses to allow for future reviews and/or termination.**

## **1.0 Background**

- 1.1** In 2009 there was a national drive towards sharing services between public authorities, mainly driven by efficiency and transformation agendas. At that time the Council started to explore any opportunities that may exist, following the establishment of the very successful Building Control Partnership that was formed some years earlier with Fareham Borough Council. It was recognised that there may be an opportunity to share a single Environmental Health Service particularly as most of the management team within Environmental Health at the Council were nearing retirement age.
- 1.2** Due to the complex nature of setting up any such arrangement it was agreed between the two Councils in late 2009 to share a joint Head of Environmental Health from 1<sup>st</sup> January 2010 and that officers would undertake further work to investigate the development and delivery of environmental health services through joint working on a fully shared basis.
- 1.3** At the beginning of 2011 a Memorandum of Understanding was agreed by the two Councils to formalise the sharing of a Head of Environmental Health. This initial arrangement was set out on a three-year term. Each Council meeting half the cost of the Head of Environmental Health.
- 1.4** The partnership worked well from the outset, delivering savings to both Councils and also enabling greater efficiency and resilience in their Service provision.
- 1.5** On 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 the former Gosport employees were transferred to

Fareham for employment purposes (TUPE) and an initial 5-year agreement between the Authorities put into place.

**1.6** In 2014 and 2015 there were staffing restructures, and this resulted in significant savings and efficiencies. In 2015 the Partnership received a Silver Award from Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise (iESE), a not-for-profit Social Enterprise created by local councils to advance improvement and transformation of local councils. The submission for that award detailed at the time the £465,000 in savings achieved by the partnership in 2015.

**1.7** As well as significant savings there is much greater efficiency by the removal of duplication between the two Councils and at the same time improving resilience and Service delivery.

## **2.0 Report**

**2.1** The latest agreement between the two Councils in respect of the partnership was for a period of 5 years from 1 April 2014 until 31 March 2019. Prior to the pandemic work was underway to renew the agreement, however progress has been hampered over the last couple of years or so. It is now proposed to make the agreement open ended, albeit subject to clauses that would enable termination of the arrangement if it no longer suited the Councils.

**2.2** There is a Partnership Panel which oversees the operation of the Partnership, this is represented by Officers and elected members from each Council. The Panel is satisfied the partnership continues to offer the benefits already detailed above and recommend that the Partnership agreement now is renewed on an open-ended basis, subject to the protections detailed above.

**2.3** Fareham Borough Council will also be reviewing the arrangements and seeking approval of the new agreement from the relevant Executive Member this month.

## **3.0 Risk Assessment**

**3.1** The current Partnership Agreement has technically expired and a new one needs to be put into place for the legal and financial security of both Councils.

## **4.0 Conclusion**

The Environmental Health Partnership is continuing to offer good value for money resilience and a good quality Service to Gosport Borough Council. The Agreement which underpins it has expired and it would be prudent to see a new partnership agreement put into place as detailed above.

<b>Financial Services comments:</b>	Contained within the report
<b>Legal Services comments:</b>	Contained within the report.
<b>Equality and Diversity:</b>	Renewal of the Agreement would have no adverse impact here.
<b>Climate Change implications:</b>	Renewal of the Agreement would have no adverse impact here.
<b>Crime and Disorder:</b>	Renewal of the Agreement would have no adverse impact here.
<b>Service Improvement Plan implications:</b>	N/A
<b>Corporate Plan:</b>	The Environmental Health Partnership helps the Council to deliver effective services
<b>EIA</b>	Not required
<b>Risk Assessment:</b>	N/A
<b>Background Papers:</b>	
<b>Appendices:</b>	
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